

## **Modern Times, Ancient Problems: Learning from the Issues and Policies of Urban Ionia**

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This study examines one of the most extraordinary geographies of the past. It addresses Ionia, which can be regarded as a threshold and opening scene for the modern man and his urban arrangements, by covering it within urban studies.

So much so that this ancient region which has been at the centre of huge attention for over 300 years, is an interesting study area with its urban references as well as its historical background. Ancient texts, inscriptions, numerous works devoted to this field from various disciplines ranging from archaeology to epigraphy, from geography to art history provide a broad platform, a cumulative knowledge area where we can discuss Ionia in an urban context today.

This region not only allows us to trace a regional urban history but also enables us to address early examples of contemporary urban issues and policies in the context of Ionia.

This picture is essential in that we can see that urbanization and its problematic nature are not issues of the recent past and that numerous problems, from urban governance to class conflicts, from mass migration to planning, urban transformation, and environmental problems, have been on the agenda of urban people since the early stages of history.

So much so that this understanding is indeed necessary so that we can learn from the past, bring fresher perspectives to the problematic nature of the city and discuss our capacities, such as adaptation and transformation, in a new light. It may also imply a more optimistic and promising perspective for our generation who is struggling with similar problems, albeit on a much larger scale, today.

Indeed, Ionia offers an excellent interdisciplinary workspace where innovative approaches can be utilized, and “fruitful exchanges and discussions” can be held regarding urban issues concerning which different contributions and collaborations are always required.

So this study focuses on urban, environmental, administrative problems, practices, and some lessons that can be taken on an axis stretching from Miletos to Phocaea.

In this context, cities that have faced many urban problems and survived disasters offer remarkable examples on this scale.

While the environmental disasters triggered by faulty public investment, urban relocation, and renewal decisions make the life cycle of ancient Ephesus pretty interesting, Colophon also occupies a remarkable place with the principle of merit prioritized in its urban planning process.

Moreover, another "good practice" from Ionia can be evaluated in the case of Teos. Sympoliteia inscriptions from this region almost show us how socio-economic transitions and integrations should be conducted in an expanding city.

Assuredly urban issues and records of Ionia promise a much larger universe of study and learning than the few examples cited here. However, this universe, with all its multiple instances, seems to imply one thing:

Regarding urban issues, neither the problems are new nor the solutions obsolete. The deep past is there to learn from it.